

pain I endure on seeing descriptions of his *fetes* everywhere. And the first time he came to visit me after his marriage, what a meeting was that! How many tears I shed! The days on which he comes are to me days of misery, for he spares me not. How cruel to speak of his expected heir. Bourrienne, you cannot conceive how heartrending all this is to me ! Better, far better to be exiled a thousand leagues from hence ! However," added Josephine, " a few friends still remain faithful in my changed fortune, and that is now the only thing which affords me even temporary consolation." The truth is that she was extremely unhappy, and the most acceptable consolation her friends could offer her was to weep with her. Yet such was still Josephine's passion for dress, that after having wept for a quarter of an hour she would dry her tears to give audience to milliners and jewellers. The sight of a new hat would call forth all Josephine's feminine love of finery.<sup>1</sup> One day I remember that, taking advantage of the momentary serenity occasioned by an ample display of sparkling gewgaws, I congratulated her upon the happy influence they exercised over her spirits, when she said, " My dear friend, I ought, indeed, to be indifferent to all this ; but it is a habit." Josephine might have added that it was also an occupation, for it would be no exaggeration to say that if the time she wasted in tears and at her toilet had been subtracted from her life its duration would have been considerably shortened.

The vast extent of the French Empire now presented a spectacle which resembled rather the dominion of the Romans and the conquests of Charlemagne than the usual form and political changes of modern Europe.<sup>2</sup> In fact, for nearly two

1 The amusing *Le ramage de chambre* Mademoiselle Avrillion informs us that

Josephine, after her divorce, amused her solitude with embroidering, and other little works of the kind. She says she was also very fond of reading, or of having books read out to her; but mademoiselle admits on fifty occasions that the principal occupation of the ex-Empress was the toilet, and that her taste for finery and expensive nick-nacks continued undiminished by time and many sorrows. Shortly after the divorce Josephine made a journey to the waters of Aix, in Savoy, and then a short tour in Switzerland.

When she was at Coppet, where Madame de Stael was residing, she declined receiving the visit of that celebrated woman, as she feared that by so doing she would offend her former husband, the great Napoleon, who was in a state of open warfare with the author of *Corinne*.

2 The so-called " French " armies of the time, drawn from all parts of the Empire and from the dependent States, represented the extraordinary fusion